TO

His Excellency U. S. Grant,

President of the United States.

A MEMORIAL

FROM

REPRESENTATIVE CHINAMEN

IN

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To His Excellency U. S. Grant,

President of the United States of America:

Sir:

In the absence of any Consular representative, we, the undersigned, in the name and in behalf of the Chinese people now in America, would most respectfully present for your consideration the following statements regarding the subject of Chinese immigration to this country:

I. We understand that it has always been the settled policy of your Honorable Government to welcome immigration to your shores from all countries, without let or hindrance.

The Chinese are not the only people who have crossed the ocean to seek a residence in this land.

II. The Treaty of Amity and Peace between the United States and China makes special mention of the rights and privileges of Americans in China, and also of the rights and privileges of Chinese in America.

III. American steamers, subsidized by your Honorable Government, have visited the ports of China, and invited our people to come to this country to find employment and improve their condition. Our people have been coming to this country for the last twenty-five years, but up to the present time there are only 150,000 Chinese in all these United States, 60,000 of whom are in California, and 30,000 in the city of San Francisco.

IV. Our people in this country, for the most part, have been peaceable, law-abiding and industrious. They performed the largest part of the unskilled labor in the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad, and also of all other railroads on this Coast. They have found useful and remunerative employment in all the manufacturing establishments of this Coast, in agricultural pursuits, and in family service. While benefiting themselves with the honest reward of their daily toil, they have given satisfaction to their employers, and have left all the results of their industry to enrich the State. They have not displaced white laborers from these positions, but have simply multiplied the industrial enterprises of the country.

V. The Chinese have neither attempted nor desired to interfere with the established order of things in this country, either of politics or religion. They have opened no whisky saloons, for the purpose of dealing out poison and degrading their fellow men.

They have promptly paid their duties, their taxes, their rents and their debts.

VI. It has often occurred, about the time of the State and general elections, that political agitators have stirred up the minds of the people in hostility to the Chinese, but formerly the hostility has usually subsided after the elections were over.

VII. At the present time an intense excitement and bitter hostility against the Chinese in this land, and against further Chinese immigration, has been created in the minds of the people, led on by His Honor the Mayor of San Francisco and his associates in office, and approved by His Excellency the Governor, and other great men of the State.

These great men gathered some 20,000 of the people of this city together on the evening of April the fifth, and adopted an address and resolutions against Chinese immigration. They have since appointed three men (one of whom we understand to be the author of the address and resolutions) to carry that address and those resolutions to your Excellency, and to present further objections, if possible, against the immigration of the Chinese to this country.

VIII. In that address numerous charges are made against our people, some of which are highly colored and sensational, and others, having no foundation whatever in fact, are only calculated to mis-

lead honest minds and create an unjust prejudice against us.

We wish most respectfully to call your attention, and, through you, the attention of Congress, to some of the statements of that remarkable paper, and ask a careful comparison of the statements there made with the facts of the case; and

(*a*) It is charged against us that not one virtuous Chinawoman has been brought to this country, and that here we have no wives nor children.

The fact is that already a few hundred Chinese families have been brought here. These are all chaste, pure, keepers-at-home, not known on the public street. There are also among us a few hundred, perhaps a thousand, Chinese children, born in America.

The reason why so few of our families are brought to this country is, because it is contrary to the custom and against the inclination of virtuous Chinese women to go so far from home, and because the frequent outbursts of popular indignation against our people have not encouraged us to bring our families with us against their will.

Quite a number of Chinese prostitutes have been brought to this country by unprincipled Chinamen, but these, at first, were brought from China at the instigation, and for the gratification of white men. And, even at the present time, it is commonly reported that a part of the proceeds of this villainous

traffic goes to enrich a certain class of men belonging to this Honorable nation—a class of men, too, who are under solemn obligation to suppress the whole vile business, and who certainly have it in their power to suppress it, if they so desired.

A few years ago our Chinese merchants tried to send these prostitutes back to China, and succeeded in getting a large number on board the out-going steamer ; but a certain lawyer of your Honorable nation, (said to be the author and bearer of these resolutions against our people) in the employ of unprincipled Chinamen, procured a writ of "habeas corpus," and brought all those women on shore again, and the Courts decided that they had a right to stay in this country if they so desired. Those women are still here, and the only remedy for this evil and also for the evil of Chinese gambling lies, so far as we can see, in an honest and impartial administration of Municipal Government in all its details, even including the police department. If officers would refuse bribes, then unprincipled Chinamen could no longer purchase immunity from the punishment of their crimes.

(*b*) It is charged against us that we have purchased no real estate. The general tone of public sentiment has not been such as to encourage us to invest in real estate, and yet our people have purchased and now own over $800,000 worth of real estate in San Francisco alone.

(*c*) It is charged against us that we eat rice, fish and vegetables. It is true that our diet is slightly different from the people of this Honorable country; our tastes in these matters are not exactly alike and cannot be forced. But is that a sin on our part, of sufficient gravity to be brought before the President and Congress of the United States?

(*d*) It is charged that the Chinese are no benefit to this country. Are the railroads built by Chinese labor no benefit to the country? Are the manufacturing establishments, largely worked by Chinese labor no benefit to this country? Do not the results of the daily toil of a hundred thousand men increase the riches of this country? Is it no benefit to this country that the Chinese annually pay over $2,000,000 duties at the Custom House of San Francisco? Is not the $200,000 annual poll tax paid by the Chinese any benefit? And are not the hundreds of thousands of dollars taxes on personal property, and the Foreign Miner's tax, annually paid to the revenues of this country, any benefit?

(*e*) It is charged against us that the "Six Chinese Companies" have secretly established judicial tribunals, jails and prisons, and secretly exercise judicial authority over the people. This charge has no foundation in fact. These Six Companies were originally organized for the purpose of mutual protection and care of our people coming to and going

from this country. The Six Companies do not claim, nor do they exercise any judicial authority whatever, but are the same as any tradesmen or protective and benevolent societies. If it were true that the Six Companies exercise judicial authority over the Chinese people, then why do all the Chinese people still go to American Tribunals to adjust their differences, or to secure the punishment of their criminals ?

Neither do these Companies import either men or women into this country.

(*f*) It is charged that all Chinese laboring men are slaves. This is not true in a single instance. Chinamen labor for bread. They pursue all kinds of industries for a livelihood.

Is it so then that every man laboring for his livelihood is a slave ? If these men are slaves, then all men laboring for wages are slaves.

(*g*) It is charged that the Chinese commerce brings no benefit to American Bankers and Importers. But the fact is that an immense trade is carried on between China and the United States by American merchants, and all the carrying business of both countries, whether by steamers, sailing vessels or railroad, is done by Americans. No China ships are engaged in the carrying traffic between the two countries.

Is it a sin to be charged against us that the Chinese merchants are able to conduct their mercantile business on their own capital? And is not the exchange of millions of dollars annually by the Chinese with the banks of this city any benefit to the banks?

(*h*) We respectfully ask a careful consideration of all the foregoing statements. The Chinese are not the only people, nor do they bring the only evils that now afflict this country. And since the Chinese people are now here under solemn treaty rights, we hope to be protected according to the terms of this treaty.

But, if the Chinese are considered detrimental to the best interests of this country, and if our presence here is offensive to the American people, let there be a modification of existing treaty relations between China and the United States, either prohibiting or limiting further Chinese immigration, and, if desirable, requiring also the gradual retirement of the Chinese people, now here, from this country. Such an arrangement, though not without embarrassments to both parties, we believe, would not be altogether unacceptable to the Chinese Government, and, doubtless, it would be very acceptable to a certain class of people in this Honorable country.

With sentiments of profound respect,

LEE MING HOW,
President Sam Yup Company.

LEE CHEE KWAN,
President Yung Wo Company.

LAW YEE CHUNG,
President Kong Chow Company.

CHAN LEUNG KOK,
President Ning Yung Company.

LEE CHEONG CHIP,
President Hop Wo Company.

CHAN KONG CHEW,
President Yan Wo Company.

LEE TONG HAY,
President Chinese Young Men's Christian Association.